

Message Text

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R 041908 Z MAY 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 084765

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION STATE, DIA INFO AMMAN, ATHENS, DHAHRAN,
LONDON, JIDDA, JERUSALEM, MOSCOW, PARIS, TEL AVIV, USUN,
AND CINCEUR FROM BEIRUT MAY 4, REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5089

EO 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINS LE

SUBJECT: INTERNAL SECURITY, SITREP 8

ATHENS FOR AMB BUFFUM

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

SITREP 8

1. REPORTS FROM FOREIGN OFFICE (HADDAD), ARMY (KANAAN AND G-2)
AND PRESIDENCY (DIB) CONTINUE TO BE ENCOURAGING AS OF 1000 Z
MAY 4. CALM REMAINS IN BEIRUT AREA WITH NO RPT NO REPORTED
INCIDENTS. HOWEVER THERE ARE REPORTS OF OCCASIONAL FEDAYEEN
CHECKPOINTS NEAR REFUGEE CAMPS. WE ARE ASSURED THAT REPORTS (BY
BBC AMONG OTHERS) OF HEAVY FIGHTING IN ARKUB ARE WITHOUT FOUNDA-
TION, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS BRIEF EXCHANGE OF MORTAR FIRE AT ONE
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SPOT EARLY IN DAY. NO CONTACT THUS FAR MAY 4 WITH HEAVILY ARMED ELEMENTS WHO CAME FROM SYRIA (AND MAY HAVE RETURNED THERE). SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON REPORTED QUIET EXCEPT FOR HALF-HEARTED ATTEMPT ORGANIZE STREET RALLY IN SIDON. NORTH LEBANON ALSO QUIET. OBSERVERS ARE IMPRESSED AND SURPRISED BY EFFECTIVENESS OF CEASE- FIRE TO THIS HOUR. MORALE OF ARMY ALSO REPORTED VERY HIGH.

2. FONMIN HAS INFORMED US THROUGH HADDAD THAT SARG (REPORTEDLY PM AYYUBI TO PM HAFEZ) HAS PROMISED TO WITHDRAW REMAINING PERSONNEL OF YARMUK BRIGADE UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS MAY 4. HARD TO SAY WHAT VALUE TO PLACE ON PROMISE BUT IT IS CHANGE FROM MAY 3 POSITION OF DENYING ANY ELEMENTS CROSSED BORDER. ATTITUDE OF EGYPTIAN STILL CONSIDER POSITIVE. MAHMOUD RIAD ARRIVES AFTERNOON MAY 4. SPECIAL EMISSARY FROM KING HASSAN ALSO ARRIVING, ALONG WITH IRAQI ENVOY. FORMER CONSIDERED BE HELPFUL WHILE LATTER CONSIDERED BE LESS SO. IN ANY EVENT GOL (DIB, TONY FRANGIE AND ABOU HAMAD) ENCOURAGED BY PRESENT STATE OF PLAY WITH OTHER ARAB GOVTS.

3. CONCERNING INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION, FONMIN (VIA HADDAD) AND DIB SAY THAT ATTITUDE OF PRIME MINISTER HAFEZ MUCH MORE POSITIVE THAN EVENING MAY 3 AND THAT HIS RESIGNATION THREAT HAS BEEN AT LEAST TEMPORARILY WITHDRAWN. VERY ACTIVE POLITICAL BARGAINING EXPECTED FOR REST OF DAY AND PROBABLY FOR SEVERAL DAYS AHEAD. PRESIDENT FRANGIE REPORTEDLY REMAINS QUITE FIRM IN HIS INSISTANCE THAT ANY NEW AGREEMENT REACHED WITH FEDAYEEN NOT RPT NOT ACCORD THEM SORT OF FREEDOM THEY HAD UNDER OLD CAIRO ACCORDS.

4. UNRWA OFFICIALS REPORT THEY HAVE HAD NO ACCESS TO ANY REFUGEE CAMPS HERE SINCE FIGHTING BEGAN MAY 2, AND THAT ACCESS STILL RESTRICTED BOTH BY ARMY AND FEDAYEEN. AGENCY HAS NO PRECISE ESTIMATE OF CASUALTY RATE AMONG RESIDENTS OF CAMPS AROUND BEIRUT, BUT CONSIDERS IT TO BE HIGH. CAMPS ELSEWHERE IN LEBANON DESCRIBED AS QUIET.
HOUGHTON

UNQUOTE RUSH

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